

H. B. 2146

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(By Delegate J. Nelson, Miller, Hamrick, Householder, Walters, Westfall, Smith, R. McGeehan,
Arvon, Gearheart and Pasdon)

[Introduced January 20, 2015; referred to the
Committee on Education then the Judiciary.]

A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section,
designated §18-2-19, relating to allowing a public school's recognition of, and education,
regarding traditional winter celebrations.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

That the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended by adding thereto a new
section, designated §18-2-19, to read as follows:

ARTICLE 2. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

§18-2-19. Winter celebrations.

(a) The county boards of education may educate students about the history of traditional
winter celebrations, and allow students and staff to offer traditional greetings regarding the
celebrations, including:

(1) "Merry Christmas";

- 1 (2) "Happy Hanukkah"; and
2 (3) "Happy holidays."
3 (b) Except as provided by subsection (c), a county school board may permit the display on
4 school property of scenes or symbols associated with traditional winter celebrations, including a
5 menorah or a Christmas image such as a nativity scene or Christmas tree, if the display includes a
6 scene or symbol of:
7 (1) More than one religion; or
8 (2) One religion and at least one secular scene or symbol.
9 (c) A display relating to a traditional winter celebration may not include a message that
10 encourages adherence to a particular religious belief.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to allow a public school's recognition of, and education, regarding traditional winter celebrations. It permits county boards of education and public schools to educate students about the history of traditional winter celebrations, and allow students and staff to offer traditional greetings regarding the celebrations.

§18-2-19 is new; therefore, it has been completely underscored.